near azeotropic compositions, based on difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) and/or 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether, [essentially] consisting <u>essentially</u> of:

		composition % by weight
I)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	1-95
	n-pentane	99-5
II)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	1-99
	iso-pentane	99-1
III)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	1-60
	dimethyl ketone (acetone)	99-40
IV)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	1-99
	1,1,1,3,3-pentafluorobutane ($CF_3CH_2CF_2CH_3$, HFC 365 mfc)	99-1
V)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	1-40
	1,1,1,4,4,4-hexafluorobutane ($CF_3CH_2CH_2CF_3$, HFC 356 ffa)	99-60
VI)	[difluorometoxy] <u>difluoromethoxy</u> bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	1-96
	methoxymethyl methylether	99-14
VII)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	30-99
	n-hexane	70-1

VIII)	1-difluoromethoxy 1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	1-93
	n-pentane	99-7
IX)	1-difluoromethoxy 1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	30-99
	dimethyl ketone (acetone)	70-1
X)	1-difluoromethoxy 1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	15-99
	n-hexane	85-1
XI)	1-difluoromethoxy 1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	5-99
	ethyl alcohol	95-1.

2. (Amended) [Use of azeotropic or near azeotropic compositions according to] The process of claim 1, wherein said foaming agents consist essentially [consisting] of:

		composition % by weight
I)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	25-95
	n-pentane	75-5
II)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	25-98
	iso-pentane	75-2

III)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	20-60
	dimethyl ketone (acetone)	80-40
IV)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	10-98
	1,1,1,3,3-pentafluorobutane ($CF_3CH_2CF_2CH_3$, HFC 365 mfc)	90-2
V)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	10-40
	1,1,1,4,4,4-hexafluorobutane ($CF_3CH_2CH_2CF_3$, HFC 356 ffa)	90-60
VI)	[difluorometoxy] <u>difluoromethoxy</u> bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	25-96
	methoxymethyl methylether	75-14
VII)	difluoromethoxy bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	35-98
	n-hexane	65-2
VIII)	1-difluoromethoxy 1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	25-93
	n-pentane	75-7
IX)	1-difluoromethoxy 1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	50-98
	dimethyl ketone (acetone)	50-2
X)	1-difluoromethoxy 1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	25-98
	n-hexane	75-2

XI) 1-difluoromethoxy 1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); ethyl alcohol — 10-98 / 90-2.

3. (Twice Amended) [Use of azeotropic compositions] The process according to claim 1 wherein the azeotropic compositions have [in correspondence of which] an absolute minimum or maximum of the boiling temperature at the pressure of 1.013 bar with respect to the pure products [is noticed,] defined as follows:

A) difluoromethoxy-bis (difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); n-pentane — 62% by wt. / 38% by wt.

B) difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); iso-pentane — 63% by wt. / 36% by wt.

C) difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); dimethyl ketone (acetone) — 42% by wt. / 58% by wt.

D) difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); 1,1,1,3,3-pentafluorobutane ($CF_3CH_2CF_2CH_3$, HFC 356 mfc) — 60% by wt. / 40% by wt.

E) difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); 1,1,1,4,4,4-hexafluorobutane ($CF_3CH_2CH_2CF_3$, HFC 356 ffa) — 20% by wt. / 80% by wt.

F)	difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); methoxymethyl methyl ether	59% by wt. 41% by wt.
G)	difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); n-hexane	75% by wt. 25% by wt.
H)	1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetra-fluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2CF_2OCF_2H$); n-pentane	61% by wt. 39% by wt.
I)	1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetra-fluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2CF_2OCF_2H$); dimethyl ketone (acetone)	79% by wt. 21% by wt.
L)	1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetra-fluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2CF_2OCF_2H$); n-hexane	74% by wt. 26% by wt.
M)	1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetra-fluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2CF_2OCF_2H$); ethyl alcohol	95% by wt. 5% by wt.

4. (Twice Amended) The process [Use as foaming agents of near azeotropic compositions] according to claim 1 wherein said foaming agents consist essentially [consisting] of:

		composition % by weight
II)	difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) with up to 40 parts by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); iso-pentane	1-99 99-1

III) difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) with up to 40 parts by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); dimethyl ketone (acetone) — 1-60 / 99-40

IV) difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) with up to 40 parts by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); 1,1,1,3,3-pentafluorobutane ($CF_3CH_2CF_2CH_3$, HFC 365 mfc) — 1-99 / 99-1

V) difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) with up to 40 parts by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); 1,1,1,4,4,4-hexafluorobutane ($CF_3CH_2CH_2CF_3$, HFC 356 ffa) — 1-40 / 99-60

VI) difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) with up to 40 parts by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); methoxymethyl methyl ether — 1-96 / 99-14

[wherein the difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) part contains up to 40% by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyldifluoromethyl ether].

5. (Twice Amended) The process [Use as foaming agents of near azeotropic compositions] according to claim 1 wherein said foaming agents consist essentially [consisting] of:

		composition % by weight
IX)	1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether <u>with up to 40 parts by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether</u> ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); dimethyl ketone (acetone)	30-99 70-1
X)	1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether <u>with up to 40 parts by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether</u> ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); n-hexane	15-99 85-1

[wherein 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether contains up to 40% by weight of difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether)].

6. (Twice Amended) <u>The process</u> [Use as foaming agents of near azeotropic compositions] according to claim 1 <u>wherein said foaming agents consist</u> essentially [consisting] of:

		composition % by weight
I)	difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) <u>with up to 40 parts by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether</u> ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); n-pentane	1-95 99-5

VII)	difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) with up to 40 parts by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether	30-99
	($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$); n-hexane	70-1

[wherein the difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether) contains up to 50% of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether].

7. (Twice Amended) The process [Use as foaming agents of near azeotropic compositions] according to claim 1 wherein said foaming agents consist essentially [consisting] of:

		composition % by weight
VIII)	1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether with up to 40 parts by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether	1-93
	($HCF_2OCF_2CF_2OCF_2H$); n-pentane	99-7
X)	1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether with up to 40 parts by weight of 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether	15-99
	($HCF_2OCF_2CF_2OCF_2H$); n-hexane	85-1

[wherein 1-difluoromethoxy-1,1,2,2-tetrafluoroethyl difluoromethyl ether contains up to 50% by weight of difluoromethoxy-bis(difluoromethyl ether)].

8. (Twice Amended) The process [Use as foaming agents of ternary near azeotropic compositions] according to claim 1 wherein said foaming agents consist essentially [consisting] of:

		composition % by weight
XII)	difluoromethoxy-bis (difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	1-64
	1,1,1,3,3-pentafluorobutane ($CF_3CH_2CF_2CH_3$, HFC 365 mfc)	98-1
	a hydrocarbon selected from n-pentane or isopentane	1-35
XIII)	difluoromethoxy-bis (difluoromethyl ether) ($HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$);	1-22
	1,1,1,4,4,4-hexafluorobutane ($CF_3CH_2CH_2CF_3$, HFC 356 ffa)	98-43
	a hydrocarbon selected from n-pentane or isopentane	1-35

10. (Twice Amended) The process [Use of compositions] according to claim 8 wherein the hydrocarbon is n-pentane or isopentane and the hydrocarbon is present in the range 1-20% by weight.

11. (Twice Amended) The process [Use of azeotropic or near azeotropic compositions] according to claim 1 wherein [the ether portion HFPE1] $HCF_2OCF_2OCF_2H$ and/or [HFPE2 can] $HCF_2OCF_2CF_2OCF_2H$ contain at least up to 10% by weight of hydrofluoropolyethers having [the same structure but with] a boiling point in the range 5°- 80°C.

12. (Twice Amended) The process [Use as foaming agents, for the preparation of polyurethanes, of the compositions] according to claim 1, wherein the compositions are selected from [mentioned at points] I, II, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII and X of claim 1 and A, B, D, E, F, G, H and L of claim 3.

13. (Amended) The process [Use of the compositions] according to claim 12, wherein said compositions are added in amounts in the range 1-15% by weight based on the total preparation[, including the same foaming agent; preferably 1.5-10% by eight, more preferably 1.5-8% by weight on the total formulation for the foam preparation].

14. (Amended) The process [Use of the compositions] according to claim 12, wherein the azeotropic or near azeotropic compositions are used in combination with H_2O and/or CO_2.

15. (Amended) Use of the compositions according to claim 14, wherein the water amount is in the range 0.5-7[, preferably 1-6, and more preferably 1-4] parts by weight on one hundred parts of polyol.

16. (Amended) The process [Use of the compositions] according to claim 14 wherein the CO_2 amount is in the range 0.6-10 [parts, preferably 1-8] parts by weight on one hundred parts of polyol.

17. (Twice Amended) The process [Use of the compositions] according to claim 1 wherein stabilizers for radicalic decomposition reactions are added, the concentration of which is in the range 0.1 - 5% by weight with respect to the foaming agent.

18. (Twice Amended) The process [Use as foaming agents for thermoplastic polymers of the compositions] according to claim 1, [mentioned at points] wherein the compositions are selected from I, II, III, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, and XIII of claim 1, and A, B, C, G, H, I, L and M of claim 3.

22. (Twice Amended) Polyurethane compositions comprising the foaming compositions [according to claim 12] selected from the foaming compositions: I, II, III, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, and XIII of claim 1, and A, B, C, G, H, I, L and M of claim 3.

23. (Twice Amended) Compositions of thermoplastic polymers [according to claim 12] selected from the foaming compositions: I, II, IV, V, VI, VII and VIII of claim 1, and A, B, D, E, F, G, H and L of claim 3.

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated October 29, 1999, claims 1-18, 22 and 23, all claims pending in the above-identified U.S. patent application, were rejected. Applicants